Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1680 - October 23 2009

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1680 with a release date of Friday, October 23rd, 2009 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. The FCC issues a public notice on ham radio operators being paid by entities holding emergency training drills as the ARRL plans a web seminar on the topic of pecuniary interest in amateur radio. Also, South Africa's Sumbandillasat comes on the air, the I-A-R-U Administrative Council meets down under and a truly rare on for S-W-L's. Find out the details on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1680 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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RADIO LAW: FCC ISSUES PUBLIC NOTICE ON AMATEUR SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS DURING GOVERNMENT DISASTER DRILLS

The FCC appears to be offering a kind of limited legal olive branch to government entities in need of ham radio operators to perform emergency communications during drills. This, while the ham is on the clock for an employer who might be sponsoring or involved in the event. Amateur Radio Newsline's Don Carlson, KQ6FM, takers a look at what the FCC has to say:

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In its October 20th public notice, the FCC begins by reiterating that transmissions by amateur stations participating in government disaster drills must comply with all applicable Amateur Service rules. It agrees that the value of the amateur service to the public is that of a voluntary noncommercial communications service, particularly with respect to providing emergency communications is one of the underlying principles of the amateur service. At the same time the agency is adamant that the Amateur Service is not an emergency radio service unto itself.

Rather, says the regulatory agency, ham radio is a voluntary, non-commercial communication service. It is authorized for the purpose of self-training, intercommunication and technical investigations. This, as carried out by licensed persons interested in radio technique solely with a personal aim and without pecuniary interest. In other words, nobody involved in the use of ham radio on the air can directly or indirectly profit from it.

The FCC then goes on to say that state and local government public safety agencies occasionally conduct emergency preparedness or disaster drills that include amateur operations. Some entities, such as hospitals, emergency operations centers, and police, fire, and emergency medical service stations, have expressed interest in having their employees who are amateur station operators participate in these drills by transmitting messages on the entity's behalf. The Commission's Rules, however, specifically prohibit amateur stations

from transmitting communications in which the station licensee or control operator has a pecuniary interest, including communications on behalf of an employer.

But here is where that olive branch of sorts comes in. The FCC release goes on to say that given the public interest in facilitating government-sponsored emergency preparedness and disaster drills, that the FCC will take this opportunity to provide a clear process for requesting a waiver, and provide the information that it required in order for it to consider granting such a request. And this is what the FCC says has to be done.

First, you the ham radio operator cannot request the waiver. Only the government agency or entity that you work for can do that. In other words, waiver requests should be submitted to the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau by the government entity conducting the drill, and must provide the following information:

First, when and where the drill will take place. Second, the identification of the amateur licensees expected to transmit amateur communications on behalf of their employers. Third is the identification of the employers on whose behalf the hams will be transmitting and lastly, a brief description of the drill.

The FCC emphasizes that the filing of a waiver request does not excuse compliance with the rules while that request is pending. Rather that the waiver must be requested prior to the drill, and employees may not transmit amateur communications on their employer's behalf unless the waiver request has been granted.

So what does this mean for Joe Ham whose employer wants him to take part in an emergency drill. If we interpret this correctly, it the employer is part of a city, state or federal agency and, if the FCC feels that the drill is important enough to issue a waiver, then those hams can take part. But only after the waiver has been issued and only during the time period that its grant is in force.

On the other hand, if Joe Ham works for some commercial organization that' s not eligible to obtain a waiver, then its best to say no, rather than to put his license on the line.

Lastly, the FCC notes that in an actual emergency, the Commission's Rules provide that an amateur station may use any means of radio-communication at its disposal to provide essential communication needs in connection with the immediate safety of human life and the immediate protection of property when normal communication systems are not available. In those circumstances says the FCC, a rule waiver is not necessary.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Don Carlson, KQ6FM, in Reno.

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The FCC release says that for further information regarding matters discussed in this Public Notice, to please contact William T. Cross of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau. The best way is by email to

william dot cross at fcc dot gov. You can download and read the entire notice at http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-09-2259A1.pdf (FCC)

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RADIO LAW: ARRL TO HOLD WEB SEMINAR ON PECUNIARY INTEREST IN HAM RADIO

Meantime, ARRL General Counsel Christopher D. Imlay, W3KD, and ARRL Regulatory Information Manager Dan Henderson N1ND, will present a web-based conference. This, to discuss the issues behind, and the reasoning for the League's recent report titled The Commercialization of Amateur Radio: The Rules, The Risks. That's the ARRL's position paper on pecuniary interest as it relates to the United States Amateur Radio Service.

The session will take place on Wednesday, October 28th beginning at 9 PM Eastern Daylight Time. According to ARRL Atlantic Division Director Bill Edgar, N3LLR, who is the sessions sponsor, all amateurs need to be aware of these issues.

The on-line gathering is available at no cost and is open to all amateurs. To register for this interactive web based meeting, go to https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/326759760 (ARRL)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: SUMBANDILLSAT IS ON THE AIR

The first contacts have been made using the newly launched SumbandilaSat ham radio payloads and it sounded like this:

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Satellite QSO audio. Hear it by downloading this weeks MP3 audio newscast at www.arnewsline.org

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According to the official mission blog, at 07:48 UTC during the first morning pass of Sunday, October 18th, controllers activated the voice beacon on 435.350 MHz. They then switched on the transponder with is uplink is on 145.880 MHz with a downlink 435.350 MHz.

Later in the day, during the first evening pass at 19:13 UTC, several radio amateurs were heard operating through the satellite transponder. Thankfully, controllers had the foresight to preserve the moment for posterity:

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Satellite QSO audio. Hear it by downloading this weeks MP3 audio newscast at www.arnewsline.org

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It was a moment of triumph for everyone who worked for years to design, build and launch Sumbandillasat. You can hear more of these initial and QSO's through this new South African ham radio satellite at http://previews.matogen.com/sunspace/assets/galleries/sounds/Sumbandila-Firs tActivePass-Recording-2009-10-18.mp3 (SA-AMSAT)

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RESCUE RADIO: SUMATRA BOUND HAM IS ON THE SATS

A ham involved in rescue radio is on his way to help earthquake ravaged Sumatra and is on the air via the ham radio satellites.

Jim Clary, ND9M, who also holds the call VQ9JC is presently deployed on a Navy ship heading for Sumatra on a humanitarian mission. This, to deliver fresh water for the victims of the recent earthquakes there.

While enroute he has been active on the ham radio satellites using a Yaesu FT897 as a transmitter and an FT817 for a receiver. The antenna is an using an Arrow and hes using a battery from an uninteruptabe power supply or U-P-S to power the station operating from the Helicopter Pad on the ship. Clary says there isn't much activity in the Indian Ocean but he is working VU's and E21's and handing out rare water grids as he whiles away the time until the ship reaches Sumatra. (ANS)

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BREAK 1

>From the United States of America, we are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the Twin City Amateur Radio Club net serving Champaign and Urbanna Illinois.

(5 sec pause here)

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BREAKING NEWS: C6APR CONTEST TEAM KILLED IN PLANE CRASH

I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF with sad news that the C6APR contest team has been killed in an aviation accident on their way to to the Bahamas to operate the CQ World Wide DX contest.

Peter Radding, W2GJ, Ed Steeble, K3IXD, Randy Hargenrader, K4QO and Dallas Carter, W3PP, lost their lives the morning of Wednesday, October 21st. This, when the twin engine Piper Aztec they were traveling on crashed shortly after takeoff from Summerville Airport in rural South Carolina. The operators were on their way to Crooked Island, Bahamas, for the annual operating event.

We will have more on this tragic story next week. (Various sources)

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RADIO POLITICS: IARU AC MEETS DOWN-UNDER

The Administrative Council of the International Amateur Radio Union held its annual meeting in Christchurch, New Zealand on October 17th and 18th. Numerous points were agreed upon. Each will have a profound effect on the future of the world-wide amateur radio service. Amateur Radio Newsline's Jim Meachen, ZL2BHF, takes a look at a few of them;

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We won't go into the minute details, but among the most important items was the review of a strategic plan for the development of support for amateur radio frequency allocations was reviewed for the period through 2012. The principal focus is on preparations for the 2012 World Radiocommunication Conference with an eye at getting a new amateur allocation in the vicinity of 500 kHz.

Another important point was adoption of a policy statement explaining the status of the Global Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Conference or GAREC. This, with respect to the International Amateur Radio Union. According to the meeting report, the Global Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Conference functions as an informal meeting of I-A-R-U member-societies and of amateur radio emergency groups within or outside of the respective national IARU member-society. The gathering serves as a forum for the exchange of experience and as an advisory body for the emergency communications work of the IARU.

And still in the area of emergency communications, the Administrative Council noted that the three I-A-R-U regions have reached consensus on three global Center of Activity frequencies for use in the event of emergencies. These frequencies are 14.300, 18.160 and 21.360 MHz.

As a result of failure to fulfill their obligations under the IARU Constitution, the rights of several I-A-R-U member-societies were placed temporarily in abeyance. These societies represent hams in Bolivia, Ecuador, Guyana, Nicaragua, Paraguay, and Suriname.

Last but by no means least, the theme of "Amateur Radio: Combining communication experience with modern digital techniques" has selected for the next World Amateur Radio Day. Tats slated for April 18, 2010.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Jim Merachen, ZL2BHF, In Auckland, New Zealand, reporting for the Amateur radio Newsline.

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The next scheduled in-person meeting of the International Amateur Radio Union Administrative Council will be held in El Salvador in conjunction with the I-A-R-U Region 2 Conference. That takes place in October 2010. (IARU)

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INTRUDER WATCH: SSB INTRUDERS ON 14.002 MHZ

If something sounds strange on 20 meter SSB where there should only be Morse, then you have likely stumbled across what appears to be a African pirate radio net. According to Region One Inthruder Watch, this group of likely unlicensed operators can be found every morning from 6:00 to 09:00 U-T-C on 14.002.2 MHz using upper sideband. They converse in what's described as an unknown tribal language they operate like a phone line. Beam headings taken from Germany place the operation at about 180 degrees and possibly putting the operation in central Africa or Angola. No calls have been heard and only names are being used to identify. (NZART, WIA News)

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ON THE AIR: CANADA'S HAM COMMUNITY TO COMMEMORATE THE 2010 WINTER OLYMPICS

Ham radio will be a part of the 2010 Olympics. Amateur Radio Newsline's Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, has more:

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The upcoming Olympic games in Canada will be celebrated on the ham bands. This with word that members of the Vancouver Olympics Amateur Radio Group will be activating three special event stations to promote and commemorate the Vancouver Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games to be held in February and March of 2010.

The special activity is already under way and will continue through March 2010. Operations will be on all bands and modes with the first station VG7V on the air from October 1st through November 30th. Then comes VG7W from December 1st of this year through January 31st of 2010. The final call will be VG7G taking to the airwaves on February 1st and continuing through March 31st 2010.

The Vancouver Olympics Amateur Radio Group says that it will be consolidating all contacts and intends to post them electronically to the ARRL's Logbook to the World. In addition, commemorative paper QSL cards for those who want them will be available at the conclusion of the events in April 2010. Cards received via the QSL Bureau will be returned the same way.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, in Los Angeles.

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In addition to the commemorative operation radio amateurs will also be handling many of the logistics for the games. Word is that most of this will be short range communications on the 1.3 meter or 220 MHz band using FM and numerous local repeaters. (OPDX)

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RADIO LAW: SOME IRC'S ABOUT TO EXPIRE

Hams who use International Reply Coupons, or IRC's, in the QSL exchange

process are advised to check the expiry dates of their current stock. This is because one batch is due to expire on December 31st. Those are the ones that you need to use up quickly before their value is gone. (GB2RS)

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ENFORCEMENT: FCC CRITICIZED OVER KWVE FINE BY 50 STATE BROADCAST ASSN'S

Turning to enforcement news, word that fifty state broadcast associations have signed onto a letter of protest to the Federal Communications Commission about a proposed $5,000 fine against KWVE FM, of San Clemente, California. This, for an EAS mistake by a station staffer.

As reported here on Newsline a few weeks ago, the case goes back about a year. That's when Calvary Chapel station KWVE transmitted an unauthorized Required Monthly Test of the Emergency Alert System. The FCC received a complaint in October 2008 that the station transmitted commercial programming and an ad as part of the test message, which were then re-transmitted by other stations and cable systems in the daisy chain. In response to a letter of Inquiry, the station told the commission one of its employees had intended to run a scheduled weekly EAS test, but ran the unscheduled RMT instead. Also, that the employee failed to transmit the End of Message code.

But in its decision last month, the FCC said KWVE's actions affected other stations. Also, the transmission of EAS tones that are followed by a broadcast that is not part of an EAS test or actual emergency information, whether intentional or accidental, compromises the integrity of the EAS system. The FCC called KWVE's action was willful and that's why it proposed a $5,000 fine.

Now, in their letter protesting the FCC's action against KWVE, the broadcast associations reminded the commission that the station is a volunteer Local Primary One or LP-1. As such, they are concerned that if the commission imposes a substantial fine against an LP-1 for a mistake, it would deter current LP-1's as well as current Primary Entry Point stations from continuing to participate voluntarily in EAS. The broadcast associations also fear the fine would also have a chilling effect preventing new stations from serving as LP-1's or Primary Entry Point stations.

The associations signing the letter represent radio and television stations in all 50 states as well as stations in the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. In the letter they ask that the agency either set aside the fine or simply admonish the station. (CGC, RW, others)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being

relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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ENFORCEMENT: CBS SAYS FCC VIOLATING ITS CIVIL RIGHTS IN SUPERBOWL CASE

And talk about a novel defense to an FCC accusation of a major broadcast violation. It looks as if CBS might just have come up with one as we hear from Newsline's Jim Davis, W2JKD:

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CBS Incorporated says that the FCC is violating its constitutional rights in hounding the broadcaster in regard to what's become known as the Superbowl Janet Jackson wardrobe malfunction.. In a Friday filing, October 2nd before the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals, CBS said the FCC has an Ahab-like obsession with the Super Bowl case, comparing the commission to the mad sea captain in Moby-Dick.

CBS lawyers say that this obsession poses an important question. They ask how many years can the FCC prolong a broadcast indecency probe of an un-scripted and unintended event that lasted nine-sixteenths of one second?

CBS says the FCC's obsessive zeal in pursuing the Super Bowl case and the attendant chill on broadcast speech show why First Amendment scrutiny by the court may not just be appropriate, but also necessary. The network also contends in the filing that the notorious wardrobe malfunction was orchestrated by Jackson and duet partner Justin Timberlake without the network's knowledge.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Jim Davis, W2JKD

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As previously reported, in September the FCC asked the court to look into whether CBS was reckless when it chose not to use video delay technology for the broadcast. The agency contends that even the fleeting exposure of an entertainers breast that was broadcast over the airwaves breast violated FCC indecency regulations.   (RW)

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D-STAR NEWS: NEW 23 CM DIASCUSSON GROUP FORMED

A new Internet based reflector group has been created to discuss the use of D-STAR Digital Voice and High-Speed Data on the 1.2 GHz band . Called D-STAR_23cm, the group discussions center around the use of the Icom ID-1 mobile, IC-9100 transceiver, RP-1V and RP-2V digital voice repeaters and all aspects of 23 centimeter data and voice communications using D-Star technology.   The group can be joined groups dot yahoo dot com slash D-Star_23 cm (WB9QZB)

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: FLEXABLE SATELLITE ANTENNAS

Flexible antennas attached to your clothing may work better for GPS or other personal satellite communication reception. That's according to the European Space Agency, as reported by TV Technology's Doug Lung. Firefighters or other emergency personnel may benefit from this technology, according to officials involved in this testing. (Todays Technology)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: IRAN MAY PUT SATELLITE IN THE HAM SATELLITE BANDS

Turning to ham radio space relayed news, there is a possibility that Iran's Mesbah-2 satellite, slated for launch early 2010, could operate on frequencies allocated to the Amateur Satellite Service.

An on-line report at astronautix.com says that the original Mesbah satellite, lost in a 2005 launch failure, was to have operated on Amateur Satellite Service frequencies. Now its being reported that Iran's Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Reza Taqipour, has said that the replacement Mesbah satellite has successfully completed pre-launch tests and is now ready for liftoff early next year.

Most observers think that there will be little difference between the transponder set-up between the lost Mesbah satellite on the new replacement bird. More is at www.astronautix.com/craft/mesbah2.htm (Southgate)

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WORLDBEAT: AUSTRALIA'S WIA NEWS NOW ON TWITTER The Wireless Institute of Australia national news service is now on Twitter. As many of you know, the WIA is the national society for Radio Amateurs in Australia. It joins the growing number of ham radio organizations making use of this service. You can find WIA National News on Twitter at twitter dot com slash VK1WIA. (WIA) ** WORLDBEAT: ARNEWSLINE ON FACEBOOK Also, remember that Amateur Radio Newsline has created a news discussion page on the Facebook social networking service. You must be a Facebook member to access it. Just go to www dot facebook dot com, join the service, use the search feature to find the Amateur Radio Newsline page and then become a friend of it. We hope to see you there. (ARNewsline(tm))

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WORLDBEAT: SWEDNS SAQ ON THE AR OCTOBER AND DECEMBER

The historic Alexanderson alternator transmitter located at Grimton, Sweden, will next take to the airwaves on October 24th at 09:00 UTC and again on December 24th at 08:00 UTC.

This museum station is operated by volunteers on special days throughout the year. It transmits CW on the frequency of 17.2kHz

signing the call SAQ. If nothing else, the station is well worth listening out for because its C-W is a musical sound and is very unique.

No reports required and no QSL cards are given for the October transmission but QSLs are available for the Christmas Eve transmission. For more information check out www.alexander.n.se. (press release)

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DX

In DX, word that the ARRL's DXCC desk has approved the recent FT5GA operation from Glorioso Island has been approved for DXCC credit. Ther operation that began on September 14th and ran through October 8th netted more than 50,000 QSO's. Until this operation, Glorioso was number 4 on DX Magazine's Most Wanted list. DL2FAG will be active from Niue and Samoa from October 19th to November 7th. He will operate as ZK2DL from Niue and from 17th to 30th November from Samoa. He plans to operate mainly RTTY, PSK and SSB on 10-80. QSL via his home call.

A German team is on the air on their 26th DXpedition to Lichtenstein where they are operating as HB0 slash HB9AON from Triesenberg. They will be there through October 30th and are active on the. The QSL manager is DJ2YE.

KL7JR reports that plans are underway for the activation of Jacquot Island before and during ARRL's December 11th to the 13th Ten Meter Contest. Listen out for VY1RST to concentrate on 10 meters for the contest and 14.260 for non-contest activities. QSL via KL7JR at his callbook address.

G4OHX, will be active as 5R8HX from Madagascar between this December 28th and January 3rd of 2010. Activity will be mainly CW. QSL via his home callsign, direct only.

Lastly, G7COD will be operational from Embudu Island in Kaafu Atoll the Maldives, until October 25th. He's using the call 8Q7AK on SSB and CW on the 80 through 10 meter bands including WARC frequencies. QSL as directed on the air.

Above from various DX news sources.

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THAT FINAL ITEM: RADIO ST HELENA DAY - NOVEMBER 14th

And finally this week, if you like to listen out for rare shortwave stations then this is for you. Once again, Amateur Radio Newsline's Jim Davis, W2JKD:

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Radio St. Helena Day will be on Saturday 14th of November 2009. This rare station is located on the Island of St Helena which lies in the South Atlantic off the coast of Angola.

The station normally provides a local radio service to the island and has a range of about 100 km. But once a year it broadcasts internationally on Shortwave at 11.092.5 MHz on upper sideband with its famed Party On-The-Air program.

This years operation will begin at 20:00 UTC and conclude at 01:00 UTC with the last 90 minutes beaming toward North America, Central America and the Caribbean. A special QSL card will be available to confirm reception reports.

To get a QSL from Radio St. Helena, you must send a written and verifiable reception report by Air Mail and include sufficient return postage to Radio St. Helena, P.O. Box 93, Jamestown, St. Helena, STHL 1ZZ, South Atlantic Ocean. Mark your envelope via Air Mail via United Kingdom & Ascension For those not aware, Saint Helena was named after St Helena of Constantinople.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Jim Davis, W2JKD.

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And less we forget, E mail reports will be not be verified and off air recordings cannot not be returned. At least that's what the press release says. (Press release)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's WIA News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline@arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Fred Vobbe, W8HDU, saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

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